

VZCZCXYZ0001
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #1119/01 1361828
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 161828Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4565
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 001119

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,
WHA/EPSC
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION US SANCTION ON VENEZUELA
VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CHAVEZ US-CHINA-IRAN US TROOPS TO
US-MEXICAN BORDER US-LIBYA NOMINEE FOR US AMBASSADOR
TO ARGENTINA ANTHONY WAYNE 05/16/06

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Local papers lead with the US imposing a ban on arms sales to Venezuela because of a lack of support by President Chavez's government for counterterrorism efforts; the USG decision to send troops to the US-Mexican border; the alleged confrontation of the US and China in Iran; similarities and differences between President Chavez and Peruvian presidential candidate Garcia; the resumption of diplomatic ties between the US and Libya; and an Argentine legislator's response to statements from nominee for US Ambassador to Argentina, Anthony Wayne.

Business-financial, center-right "InfoBae" and daily-of-record "La Nacion" carry placements of PAS press release on the new Embassy Website, which provides updated information on the US-Argentine bilateral relationship as well as on the US foreign policy, society and cultural values.

Business-financial "El Cronista" carries an opinion piece by Chuck Hagel, Republican senator for Nebraska and member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is headlined "The US should look to Iran with a broader approach. The military option is not a long-term solution aimed at preventing Tehran's nuclear ambitions."

2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

- "First US sanction on Venezuela: a ban on arms sales"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," writes (05/16) "The US banned yesterday the sale of arms to Venezuela because it believes the Chavez administration 'does not fully cooperate' in the global war on terrorism.

"According to US Assistant Secretary for Hemispheric Affairs Thomas Shannon, the USG decision was made 'with reluctance.' And he explained that Venezuela has close ties with Cuba and with Colombian guerrilla groups, namely the FARC and the NLA. Both groups appear in the US State Department's listing of terrorist organizations. Shannon also referred to Venezuela's ties with Iran, particularly due to Venezuela's stance during the voting in which it was decided to submit the Iranian case to the UN.

"The ban, the first sanction Washington imposes on the Chavez administration, also includes every kind of US arms and military technology on behalf of third countries. This means that, from now on, no country may sell to Venezuela not even spare parts for the US weapons it already has in its arsenal.

"... Thomas Shannon noted that the USG already has 'decertified' Venezuela for lack of cooperation in fighting drug trafficking."

- "Garcia vs. Chavez, in a round of populist leaders"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" carries an opinion piece by contributor Andres Oppenheimer, who writes (05/16) "During an interview, Alan Garcia said 'I am against imperialism because I do not like the US presence in Iraq and because I do not like Chavez's oil and money in Peru. This is what I call being anti-imperialistic.'

"The bad news is that, in the first round of elections, Peruvians decided that Garcia will be Humala's rival. The good news is that if Garcia wins, he will probably lead a Latin American movement against Chavez's 'imperialism.' If there is a political leader in the region that can reply to Chavez using his same language, it is Garcia."

- "The balance of power is also at stake in Asia"

Leading "Clarín" carries an op-ed piece by Sergio Cesarin, political analyst and researcher, who writes (05/16) "One needs to understand Iran's latest moves

in the international scenario as part of the world scenario in which the US and China are competing. Iran is another point of confrontation of the two countries.

"China is perceived by Washington as a proliferating country...

"What most disturbs Washington is that state companies that are part of the Chinese military complex appear among the main suppliers of nuclear capabilities transfers to Iran.

"Iran can be compared with Cuba in this regard. In the Cuban case, the Chinese technical, economic and financial cooperation softens the negative consequences of the US embargo.

"In the same way, the Sino-Iranian relationship proves the limited effect of economic sanctions and how counterproductive they may turn with time for US interests."

- "Bush announced it will send 6,000 troops to the US-Mexican border"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," comments (05/16) "... US President George W. Bush announced it will send 6,000 troops to the US-Mexican border in order to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the US. While he insisted on his proposal to give temporary work permits to undocumented immigrants, the president emphasized the importance of border security.

"The purpose of sending troops is political rather than military. No one believes that the military will be able to really stop the entry of immigrants along the 3,200 kilometer-border. However, most analysts believe the main purpose of the decision is to ease

tension among conservative Republicans, who believe that Bush has mismanaged the problem of illegal immigrants."

- "Between authoritarianism and extreme social control"

Oscar Raul Cardoso, international analyst of leading "Clarín," opines (05/16) "The imminent sending of US troops to the long US-Mexican border may be understood as the Bush administration's response to the increasing concern of society about the pressure from illegal immigrants.

"In a broader context, the decision may be interpreted as part of the political architecture aimed at relieving that pressure without committing the many benefits businessmen obtain from the cheap labor of desperate immigrants.

"And it can also be understood as another symptom of the mutation neo-conservatives are imposing on the G.O.P. - from a political force related to the idea of individual freedoms to a very different one, whose principles are based on the obscure territory of authoritarianism and extreme social control."

- "Chavez unlimited"

James Scott, columnist of liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald," writes (05/16) "President Hugo Chavez has a new idea for Venezuelan term limits: 25 years. At a recent event, the fiery Venezuelan leader... announced that he wanted to put the question of his political future in the hands of the people.

"... The USG - the magnet for much of Chavez's scorn - has raised its concerns over his actions. Earlier this year, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Chavez was leading nations away from democracy...

"So how has Chavez been able to do it? Observers point out that he is being aided by a weak and fragmented opposition. Rather than rally support against him, the opposition has chosen recently to boycott elections

rather than face public defeat. That move, for example, helped Chavez-backed politicians in December win a majority of 167 seats in the national assembly.

"... While the risk exists for Chavez to manipulate his opposition and politics, Alejandro Velasco, a professor at Duke University, said if he fails to deliver on promises to the people then he runs the risk of an uprising."

- "US-Libyan relationship will be reestablished"

Business-financial "Ambito Financiero" reports (05/16) "The US announced yesterday that it will resume its full diplomatic relationship with Libya and will soon open an embassy in Tripoli in what is seen as the consequence of the North African country having publicly renounced its purposes to obtain WMD.

"As a previous step, Libya was removed from the US State Department's 'black list' of countries sponsoring international terrorist groups."

- "Diaz Bancalari compared Ambassador Wayne with Braden"

Conservative "La Prensa" reports (05/16) "Deputy Jose Maria Diaz Bancalari '(We have) another (Spruille) Braden,' in reference to the new US ambassador to Argentina, Earl Anthony Wayne, who will succeed Lino

Gutierrez.

"The US diplomat has recently made some statements that were badly received (by some local deputies), and the US legislator replied that 'the opposition needed a Braden... and now it has it. It seems the times of the Union Democratica. Since this opposition, which is made up by Sobisch, Macri and Carrio, only accounts for 20%, it will need a Braden.'

"Some days ago, Wayne praised the 'reforms' performed by Carlos Menem and explained that he would help change Argentines' 'distorted' image of the IMF. He added that 'it is important for Argentina to continue creating a more positive investment environment.'"

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

GUTIERREZ